



# American Indian Health Promotion and Screening at the Pine Ridge Reservation



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## Abstract

American Indians are at a disadvantage when it comes to resources, and that alone contributes to the limited education, early decline in health, and preventable illnesses. The senior nursing students of IUS provided free health screenings on an American Indian reservation that included blood pressure, blood glucose, and cholesterol levels. The students further educated each participant on their health, promoted healthy habits, and encouraged follow up if needed. This poster will present how IUS senior nursing students used resources to provide health education and screening to the American Indian community at Pine Ridge and the results that followed.

## Health Promotion and Screening

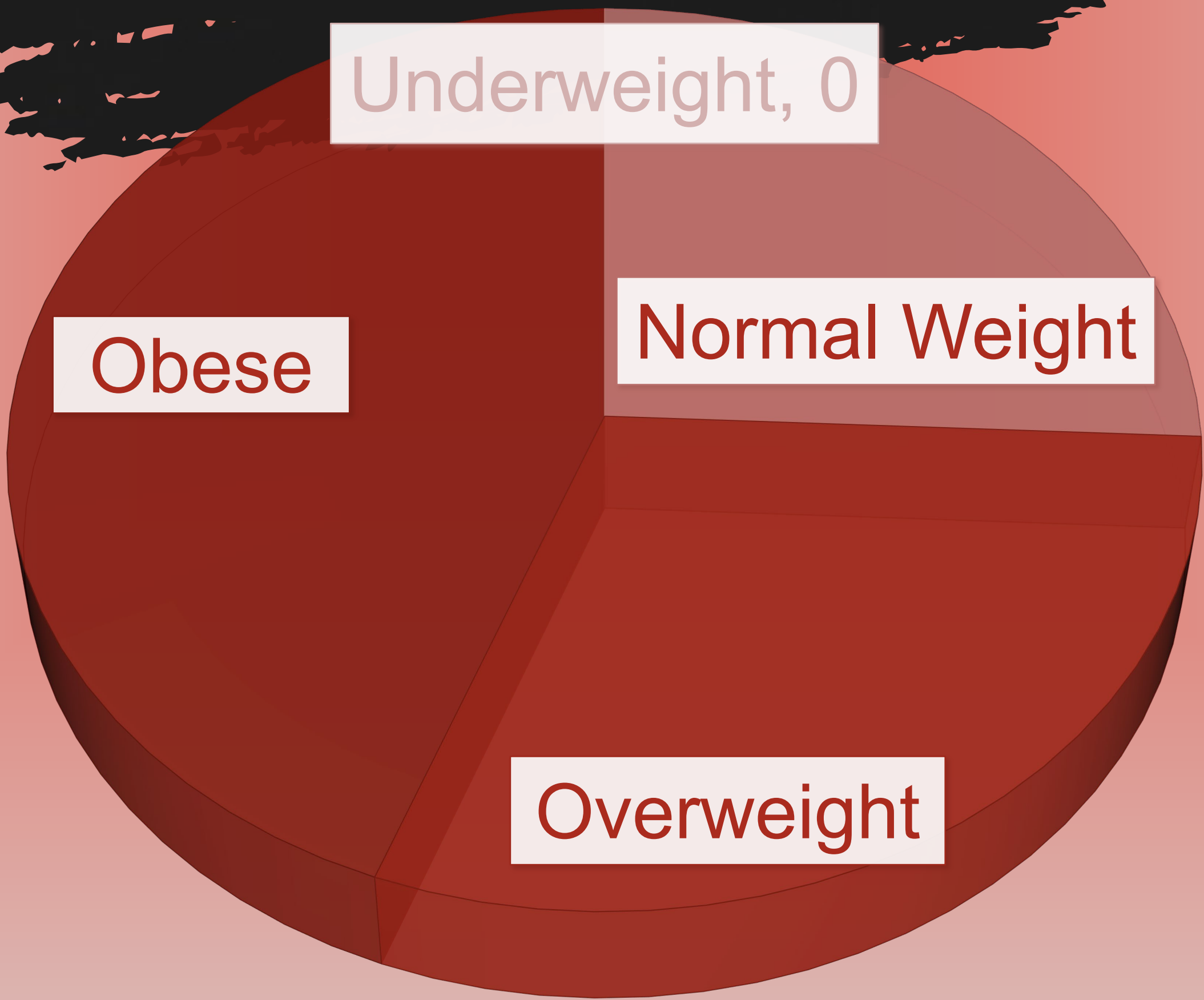
- IUS Nursing Students used a system called “Tele Health” that documented a participant’s age, gender, medical history, vital signs, blood sugar, and cholesterol levels.
- During the participants screening, questions were asked such as: age, gender, family medical history, present diagnosis/illness, along with charting of blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol levels that were measured during their screening.
- As five to six of us students were performing health screenings, the other four were in pairs trying to interact within the community and inform the American Indians what our purpose of being there was, along with educating about our free service.
- Education was provided to the community on how to manage high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol levels with improvement in diet and exercise.

## Cultural Consideration

- The reservation did not have enough resources, therefore maintaining a healthy lifestyle is very challenging.
- Due to the bloodshed history, American Indian do not trust the government’s system, so hospitals/clinics are not widely used by the community.
- Unemployment and Poverty rates are high due to lack of resources and support.
- Comorbidities are high (especially Diabetes, Alcoholism).

## Data

- The American Indian population is at a higher risk for chronic diseases and that can be backed up by the data collected.
- Out of the 70 participants who were screened, 44% (31) were obese, 30% (21) were overweight, 26% (18) were normal weight, and 0% were underweight. That makes **74%** over the normal weight.
- Evidence have shown that chronic disease is related to higher BMI and their higher BMI is due to their major lack of resources that would lead to lesser health awareness, higher poverty rate, and fewer healthy food choices.



(J. Mattingly, personal communication, April 20, 2020)

## Conclusion

- Although we are not able to reassess the participants on the next trip, we were able to provide health promotion and education based on the screening results.
- Participants were educated on the importance of exercising, eating healthier (reducing fatty foods, sugar, salt), and following up with their local provider.

